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Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues of the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues

Twenty-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and beyond: a framework to advance indigenous women's issues

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the achievements made by indigenous women since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, at both the national and international levels. In particular, the report highlights relevant activities included in the national review reports of Member States for the fifty-ninth session of the Commission of the Status of Women in 2015, which focus on the twenty-year review in the areas of: education and capacity-building; indigenous women and health; violence against indigenous women and access to justice; indigenous women in power and decision-making; the indigenous girl child; indigenous women and poverty; and indigenous women and statistics. The present report not only highlights efforts by States but also provides a possible resource for indigenous peoples, Governments and entities of the United Nations system, advocates the sharing of good practices and draws attention to ongoing concerns faced by indigenous women and measures needed to address these challenges.

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I. Introduction

1. Indigenous peoples live in approximately 90 countries in all regions of the world. In most of these countries, the legacy of colonialism and the history of oppression and discrimination of indigenous peoples over many decades remain evident. For example, well-documented gaps remain in terms of poverty rates, health, education and access to justice, among numerous other issues.

2. Within this already challenging context, indigenous women face additional barriers to the in terms of the full enjoyment of their human rights. Indigenous women experience multiple forms of discrimination, often lacking access to education, health care and ancestral lands; they face disproportionately high rates of poverty and are subjected to violence, including domestic violence and sexual abuse, and in some contexts are victims of trafficking and suffer from the effects of armed conflict. According to the members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, while indigenous women share many concerns with other women throughout the world, including poverty, the abuse of human rights and lack of economic and social development, indigenous women's issue are distinct, and they often have different perspective on these issues. The fact that indigenous women are not a homogeneous category, but represent a wide variety of cultures with different needs and concerns, should be a central premise for the design of policies and programmes to advance their interests and the issues that affect them.[1]

II. Analysis of achievements since 1995

A. Action at the international level

3. Indigenous women have participated in global processes to assert indigenous peoples' rights, women's rights and related rights. Over the past two decades, these processes have yielded notable achievements, both for indigenous women and for the human rights movements more broadly. To facilitate their participation in international processes, indigenous women have established local, national and international networks. In Asia, Africa and the Americas, there are now regional networks of indigenous women that have lobbied governmental and other bodies to draw attention to their diverse situations and to the issues they wish to have addressed.

4. With respect to the participation of indigenous women in international processes, it is worth noting their involvement at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) and their continuous participation in the follow-up meetings on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Indigenous women have also participated in the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and have taken part in numerous official events, side events, press conferences and training sessions. As a result of their advocacy, two resolutions concerning indigenous women have been adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women: resolution 49/7, entitled Indigenous women: beyond the ten-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and resolution 56/4, entitled Indigenous women: key actors in poverty and hunger eradication. Resolution 56/4

[1] See E/2004/23, para. 3.

was a landmark achievement in terms of the recognition of the role of indigenous women and their traditional knowledge in the development process towards poverty eradication.

5. With respect to the indigenous rights movement, indigenous women were active participants and contributors during the two decades of negotiations surrounding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 2007. The human rights of indigenous women are protected by all of the provisions of the Declaration, especially article 22, which calls for particular attention to be paid to their rights and special needs, and calls upon States to take measures to ensure that indigenous women enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.

6. Between 1995 and 2007, advocacy by indigenous women, together with indigenous men, helped influence the establishment of the three United Nations mechanisms with specific mandates concerning indigenous peoples: the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, in 2000;[2] the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, in 2001;[3] and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in 2007.[4] Each of these mechanisms has continuously addressed indigenous women's concerns through special thematic sessions, international expert meetings, country visits and studies. Indigenous women have also occupied leadership roles in each of these bodies.

7. The annual sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues have provided an important platform for indigenous women to share experiences and challenges and to exchange proposals and strategies to help overcome situations of concern. Indigenous women have participated in these sessions in large numbers, organizing their own caucus, and have spoken with a strong voice. Since its first session, the Permanent Forum has paid special attention to indigenous women, and its third session was given the theme "Indigenous Women". In the course of the 13 sessions of the Permanent Forum, 150 recommendations have been adopted that refer directly to the situation of indigenous women.

8. The recommendations of the Permanent Forum regarding indigenous women and girls are reflected in its broad thematic mandate, addressing a wide range of issues, including education, culture, health, human rights, environment, climate change, development, conflict, violence, sexual and reproductive rights and political participation. Recommendations on these and other topics have been made to Member States, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, indigenous peoples and civil society organizations.

9. Within this context, States have submitted reports to the Permanent Forum on an annual basis. Over the course of its 13 sessions, 87 reports have been submitted to the Permanent Forum by 37 Member States. The actions implemented by States are diverse and reflect different levels of political commitment. Generally speaking, States have provided information in relation to structural, process and outcome-oriented measures taken at the national level in relation to indigenous peoples,

[2] Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/22.

[3] Originally established by the Commission on Human Rights in 2001 (resolution 2001/57) and subsequently extended by the Human Rights Council (resolutions 5/1, 6/12, 15/14 and 24/9).

[4] Human Rights Council resolution 6/36.

including indigenous women. Structural measures reflect the ratification/adoption of legal instruments and existence of basic institutional mechanisms necessary for the realization of human rights. Process measures refer to policy instruments, programmes and specific interventions taken by States and individuals to protect and fulfil rights. Finally, outcome measures, whether directly or by proxy measures, are reported on the realization of indigenous peoples' rights.

10. Other issues of concern related to indigenous women were raised in the context of the 2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. In order to raise the profile of indigenous women within the discussions on the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network was formed. The Network is part of the indigenous caucus that is involved in, and which tracks the negotiations on sustainable development and climate change.

11. Indigenous women are increasing raising their concerns with the relevant United Nations treaty bodies, including the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Indigenous women have presented shadow reports and participated in sessions of the treaty bodies in the context of the periodic review of specific countries.[5]

12. More recently, indigenous women participated in the process leading up to the high-level plenary session of the General Assembly, known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.[6] In 2013, indigenous women participated at the Global Indigenous Preparatory Conference held in Alta, Norway, and their concerns were reflected in the Alta Outcome Document.[7] In particular, theme 1 (on indigenous peoples' lands territories, resources, oceans and waters) and theme 4 (on indigenous peoples' priorities for development with free, prior and informed consent) reflect priority issues for indigenous women. In addition, indigenous women organized the World Conference of Indigenous Women, — "Progress and challenges regarding the future we want" — held in October 2012 in Lima. A political position and a plan of action[8] were adopted as a framework to eradicate violence, discrimination, racism and poverty faced by indigenous women around the world.

13. On 22 and 23 September 2014, the General Assembly held a high-level plenary meeting known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples at United Nations Headquarters, with the participation of a significant representation of indigenous women. The World Conference resulted in a concise, action-oriented outcome document, adopted by consensus at the opening,[9] which refers to indigenous women in paragraphs 10, 17, 18, and 19. The outcome document was prepared on the basis of inclusive and open informal consultations with Member States and indigenous peoples, in which indigenous women were involved through their own representatives. In addition, an indigenous woman from Nicaragua was appointed as one of the advisers to the President of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly for the preparation of the conference.

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[5] See CEDAW/C/MEX/CO/7-8.

[6] See General Assembly resolution 65/198.

[7] A/67/994, annex.

[8] See E/C.19/2014/9.

[9] General Assembly resolution 69/2.

14. Indigenous women have also participated in, and influenced decision-making at, a wide variety of other meetings and at conferences organized by United Nations agencies, international non-governmental organizations and Governments. Conscious efforts have been made to provide financial support to women to participate in such meetings through the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, support by non-governmental organizations and support by Governments. Such support has helped ensure women's perspectives and proposals are visible and will have equal representation at these forums.

B. Analysis of national reviews presented to the Commission on the Status of Women

15. This section of the report provides a summary of national reviews presented to the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/18, the Commission will undertake a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. In total, over 150 States submitted national reviews. Thirty-five States, predominantly from the Latin American and the Caribbean region, included specific information related to indigenous women in their reports. A summary of the information included in the national reviews that is most relevant to the situation of indigenous women are highlighted below. Due to limitations of space, not all examples of laws, policies and programmes at the national level relevant to indigenous women are reflected below.

16. The section is divided into themes, bearing in mind the 12 action points identified in the Beijing Platform of Action, which are: women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanism for the advancement of women; human rights of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child. However, given that the national reports submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women do not include information related to indigenous women under all of the action points, only those categories for which information was provided are included. In addition, there is a section on data related to indigenous women. While this is not one of the points of the Platform of Action, several States have provided information on data, and it is of overarching relevance to the other themes.

1. Education and capacity-building

17. A number of States reported on the issue of indigenous women and education. The information provided is related, inter alia, to efforts to: increase literacy among indigenous women; encourage school attendance and completion rates among female indigenous students; and provide education in indigenous languages and in culturally appropriate ways.

18. **Australia** reported that while the education gap has narrowed somewhat over recent years, educational participation and attainment rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians still remain below those of non-indigenous Australians. With respect to female indigenous students, the retention rates between years 7 and 8 year olds and 12 year olds were 58.2 per cent for indigenous girls and

86 per cent for non-indigenous girls. In total, only 50 per cent of indigenous female students progress to year 12.

19. The **Plurinational State of Bolivia** reported it had reduced illiteracy through its national literacy programme called "Yo si puedo" as well as its "Yo si puedo seguir" programme, which is oriented to indigenous women as well as other groups of women. In 2010, the Government passed law No. 070, entitled "Educación Aveline Siñani y Elizardo Pérez", which helps increase access to education and raise retention rates for girls. The Government has also implemented the "Juancito Pinto" programme, which provides financial assistance for girls to attend school, as well as a school meal and transportation programmes that are directed towards indigenous and campesina girls. In addition, the Government has established a network of indigenous universities and provided scholarships so that indigenous women may attend.

20. **Canada** reported on several initiatives addressing the educational situation of indigenous peoples in Canada, which, according to initial reports, have increased education outcomes for both boys and girls. Despite this, the Government reported that there is still a gap in education achievement between aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations, with 74 per cent of aboriginal women, as compared to 89 per cent of non-aboriginal women achieving high school or higher education in 2011. The Government reported a steady increase in the proportion of aboriginal women holding a university degree, and noted that funding has been provided to First Nations to attend college and university.

21. **Chile** expressed its interest in establishing programmes specifically designed to eradicate illiteracy among indigenous women and girls.

22. **Guatemala** reported it has reduced illiteracy rates over the past decade, although literacy rates for indigenous women, at 74.5 per cent, are still below those of non-indigenous women, (81.4 per cent). To address this issue, the National Council on Literacy has adopted the "Our Life" literacy project in Mayan languages, with a gender focus, which also provides training in other skills, including scientific and technological skills. The project is implemented in four Mayan languages in 24 municipalities within the departments of San Marcos, Huehuetenango, Totonicapán, Sololá, Quiche, Chiquimula and Alta Verapaz. Between 2009 and 2011, 1,309 youth and adults participated in the project.

23. **Colombia** also established a fund to support women living in situations of armed conflict who wish to complete their higher education, giving priority to indigenous women, women with disabilities and Afro-descendant women. Some 357 women have received support through the fund.

24. **Ecuador** stated it recognizes the need to narrow the education gap to address the unequal position of indigenous women in terms of educational opportunity. Between 2010 and 2011, Ecuador put a bilingual and intercultural education system in place, reaching 64,041 indigenous girls at the basic/general education level and 5638 indigenous girls at the family/infant education level. It has also constructed schools that provide access to technology in rural areas.

25. **Finland** reported that the national anti-discrimination campaign, "Equality is Priority", was implemented in 2011 with the aim of promoting equality in education. The campaign included the preparation of specific teaching materials on

the Sámi people. The materials also targeted teachers, trade unions and school administrators at the national and local levels.

26. **Guyana** reported that, between 1992 and 2014, it had increased the number of secondary schools in the interior of the country, which is inhabited by Amerindian people, from 1 to 13. The access to secondary education for Amerindian children provided students with the opportunity to train to be teachers, nurses and doctors and to work in the areas of law enforcement and defence.

27. **India** reported that the issue of low female literacy among scheduled tribes is of particular concern. Since 2008, it has implemented a programme to improve education for girls from scheduled tribes in 54 identified low-literacy districts, where the scheduled tribes population is 25 per cent or more and the literacy rate is below 35 per cent, according to the 2001 census. The Government has also implemented a programme that provides residential upper primary school education in areas where female literacy is below the natural average, with a special focus on girls belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, "other backward classes" and minority communities. In 2009, the Government launched a programme to improve access to quality secondary education, with priority given to areas with a concentration of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and minority communities.

28. **Israel** reported that the Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women provides Bedouin women with the opportunity to complete their education through a variety of special courses and training programmes. It also has improved infrastructure to allow Bedouin girls to attend schools near their homes.

29. **Mexico** recognizes the need to improve access to secondary-level education in rural areas. In this regard, the Government has been organizing national meetings of rural, indigenous and peasant women to promote capacity-building, as well as to exchange experiences in areas such as land tenure and social and productive organization.

30. **Nepal** reported that it is implementing its second higher education project (2004-2014). One of the objectives of the project is to improve access to higher education for academically qualified underprivileged students — including girls, Dalit and educationally disadvantaged indigenous nationalities, — through the use of financial assistance and grants for students, and by increasing the capacity of the secondary schools.

31. **New Zealand** stated gains had been made in the area of education. In 2005, 40 per cent of female Māori graduates held a national certificate of educational achievement at level two or above; by 2012, this number had increased to 63 per cent. Overall, the participation rate of Māori and Pacific women in tertiary education is higher than participation by European and Asian women. Government actions to improve outcomes for Māori women include continuing the process of settling historic land claims between the Crown and iwi (Maori tribes).

32. **Norway** reported that the overall proportion of women enrolled in higher education is greater than that of men. The education level of Sámi men is slightly lower than for the rest of the population, whereas that of Sámi women is on the same level. In 2012, the proportion of Sámi women and men aged between 19 and 24 enrolled in higher education was 39.1 per cent and 26.1 per cent respectively. This was an increase from 1995, when the corresponding figures were 29.7 per cent for Sámi women and 22.5 per cent for men.

33. The **Philippines** reported that it is developing measures to increase opportunities for indigenous boys and girls to access at least basic education that recognizes and respects their culture, practices and needs, in particular through the indigenous peoples' education programme of the Department of Education, which provides funding for capacity-building.

2. Indigenous women and health

34. States provided information related to the health of indigenous women. While the specific activities and successes of programmes implemented at the country level vary among States, in general, Governments provided information related to culturally appropriate health services, maternal health programmes, sexual and reproductive health programmes and disease prevention programmes, among others.

35. **Australia** recognized that by improving the health of all Australian women, the health of the whole community is improved. In this regard, in July 2013, Australia launched the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2012-2023, which focuses on key areas to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. The Government has also implemented programmes to improve child and maternal health services, including the "Healthy for life" programme, the "Australian Nurse-Family Partnership "and the "New directions: an equal start in life for indigenous children" programme.

36. **Brazil** reported that in health services the particularities of women from different cultural backgrounds are taken into account.

37. In **Canada**, First Nation, Inuit and Métis women, like other Canadians, receive universal access to health care, which is provided by the federal, provincial and territorial governments, in accordance with the Canada Health Act. The federal Government funds and delivers health care in 85 remote/isolated First Nation communities that provincial health-care services do not reach. It has rolled out several programmes for at-risk populations of Canadian women and girls in areas such as culturally-appropriate health and social development for children, maternal health and prenatal nutrition (which includes a component targeted at First Nation and Inuit women). The Government has also implemented the "Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities" and "Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve" programmes, which support early childhood development in Métis, Inuit and First Nations populations.

38. **Colombia** reported that since 2009, within the framework of the national policy on sexual and reproductive health, it has been implementing activities to enhance indigenous women's health, including sexual and reproductive health, and programmes with the Emberá people to prevent genital mutilation and other forms of violence, as well as training programmes with Emberá-Chamí healers. In 2012, the Government held a summit with indigenous authorities to provide a space for dialogue about how to deal with practices that are harmful to the health and life of indigenous women.

39. **Chile** noted that the Ministry of Health has developed a specific programme for indigenous peoples, which incorporates an intercultural approach. The programme provides intercultural health and alternative health-care services to indigenous peoples, in particular for women. In 2013, the Ministry of Health produced and distributed educational materials on pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum

care and parenting in regions with the largest indigenous populations in the country. In addition, in hospitals in the regions of Arica and Iquique, programmes have been implemented to promote natural childbirth and other culturally appropriate services. The Ministry has also signed an agreement with the State entity for the development of indigenous peoples, CONADI (Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena), oriented at preventing discrimination against indigenous peoples with HIV/AIDS. The Ministry of Planning has also published a guide on pregnancy in the indigenous languages Mapudungún, Aymara, Rapa Nui and Huilliche, as part of its "Chile Crece Contigo" initiative.

40. **Ecuador** noted that it has established the national directorate on interculturality, rights and social participation in health, which has created protocols related to ethnicity. In particular, in 2010, it implemented a sub-process on intercultural medicine and an intercultural health policy for rural women, including indigenous women, to facilitate access to health services.

41. **Guatemala**'s health policy for adolescents and youth and its national comprehensive plan include considerations for ethnicity. The Government has also designed a strategy for the recognition of social and cultural health promoters and midwives, reflected in a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Health and the National Alliance of Indigenous Women's Organizations. The Ministry engaged in a dialogue with midwives for the development of the strategy in order to better understand their practices in providing maternal care and in family planning. The Government has also developed a guide on indicators of cultural relevance in health to measure the quality of services provided in different sociocultural contexts. In addition, the President's secretariat on women signed an agreement with the Ministry of Health to provide technical assistance to help eliminate inequalities in access to health care based on gender, ethnicity or other reasons. The Government provides technical support to the National Council on the Health of Indigenous Peoples, including training for the role of the midwives and health care for women.

42. **Mexico**'s efforts to promote health programmes for indigenous peoples and other groups include developing models and guides for integral health as well as criteria that health providers are required to use.

43. **New Zealand** reported that Maori women consistently fare worse than other women across a range of health indicators, although some gains have been made. For example, in 2009, 49 per cent of eligible Maori women had free regular breast screenings; and by 2014 that coverage had been extended to 66 per cent of Maori women. The Government reports that it has also implemented a human papillomavirus (HPV) immunization programme, which been successful in targeting Māori women. Improvements have been achieved in raising life expectancy among the Māori population, although it still remains lower than the rest of the population, with life expectancy for Māori women at 75 years of age (compared with 83 years for non-Maori women) and for Maori men at age 70 (compared with 79 years for non-Maori men). Since 2010, the Government has been implementing *Whānau Ora*, an integrated service-delivery programme that requires multiple Government agencies to work together with families and communities as a whole. Through this programme, families are provided with a practitioner that works with them to identify and provide access to a range of health and social services.

44. **Norway** reported that it gives special attention to health-care services for the Sámi people. In 2010, the Northern Norway Regional Health Authority carried out an extensive analysis of the provision of specialist health-care services (both mental and physical care) for the Sámi people. The study found that the Sámi population has a significantly lower incidence of cancer, especially breast and lung cancer. It also found no notable differences in the care provided to Sámi and non-Sámi people. In 2012, a population survey was conducted in the four northern counties, based on a questionnaire that was translated into indigenous Sámi languages. The data are currently being analysed, and the survey results will be used, inter alia, in studies for mental health from perspectives of ethnicity and gender.

45. The **Philippines** has developed a human rights-based programme called the "conditional cash transfer" programme, which provides financing to eligible low-income households, including indigenous cultural communities, for health and nutrition services. The programme has reportedly helped increase the number of women receiving prenatal and postnatal care.

46. **Suriname** reported that it has increased the level of access for marginalized and vulnerable women to sexual and reproductive health-care services, and has specific programmes focused on indigenous and Maroon women.

3. Violence against indigenous women and access to justice

47. The issue of violence against indigenous women is a matter of concern for several States, which have developed programmes and invested significant resources in initiatives to tackle the problem.

48. **Australia** has adopted a National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children (2010-2022), through which has reportedly implemented local solutions to prevent and respond to violence. Furthermore, the "respectful relationship education" projects, aimed at violence prevention, have reached over 32,000 participants, across the country, including over 8,100 young people from indigenous backgrounds. Australia has also provided $74.6 million Australian dollars (approximately 60.4 million United States dollars) in 2013 and 2014 for Aboriginal legal services across the country to deliver culturally sensitive, accessible and effective legal assistance and related services to indigenous peoples. In 2012 and 2013, Aboriginal legal services provided assistance to 61,373 women in urban, regional and remote areas.

49. **Canada** reported that, according to a 2009 report, aboriginal women are nearly three times more likely than non-aboriginal women to be victimized. A wide array of legislative and non-legislative initiatives at the federal, provincial and territorial levels has been developed to address this issue. These include a multi-jurisdictional response to family violence through the criminal justice system (including strengthening the Criminal Code, police and prosecution policies, risk assessment tools, specialized domestic violence courts and victim services and abuser treatment programmes), as well as civil law and broader family violence prevention responses, assistance to victims and initiatives to prevent violence. The issue of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls is also a matter of serious concern. The Government has taken numerous steps, in partnership with aboriginal people, to improve safety for aboriginal women and girls and to strengthen the response of the judicial system to cases of missing and murdered aboriginal women, and has implemented a seven-step strategy for this purpose.

Funding has also been provided directly to community organizations as part of overall efforts to reduce violence.

50. **Chile** provided information about a future strategy and action plan to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence against women, including indigenous women. There are also plans to establish an inter-institutional Government entity that will coordinate the strategy.

51. The Government of **Colombia** reported that organizations of women, including indigenous women, are drafting the plan of action on guarantees for women leaders and defenders of human rights, which will be implemented by an inter-sectorial group of ministries.

52. In **Guatemala**, the Indigenous Women's Ombudsman (Defensoria de la Mujer Indigena) works broadly to promote the rights of indigenous women, including through training of indigenous women leaders and overseeing cases involving violence against women. The Ombudsman's 12 offices responded to 37,235 cases between 2008 and 2012. The Ombudsman also implements a framework for addressing access of justice for indigenous women.

53. **India** reported that the crime statistics publication of the National Crime Records Bureau contains a chapter on crime against some vulnerable sections of the society, including women, children, and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

54. **Mexico** remains concerned about the need to develop a model to eradicate violence against indigenous women and girls with an intercultural and human rights approach, including through the national commission to prevent and eradicate violence against women (CONAVIM). Between 2003 and 2013, the Government installed 21 houses for indigenous women which, among other things, provide assistance to indigenous women victims of violence. In 2013, the judiciary issued various protocols for justice workers to implement in cases involving members of indigenous peoples or communities.

55. **New Zealand** stated that Māori women are twice as likely to experience violence as other women. Its efforts to address the high levels of violence against women and girls includes the *E Tu Whānau* programme of action for addressing family violence (2013 to 2018), which provides a Māori conceptual framework for addressing this subject. It also provides a five-year framework within which Maori communities and the Government can continue to work together to address issues of violence. In addition, the New Zealand parliamentary committee on social services is undertaking an inquiry into the funding provided for social services in relation to sexual violence, which includes a review of whether such services for Maori peoples are accessible, culturally appropriate and sustainable.

4. Indigenous women in power and decision-making

56. Some States included information about the participation of women in decision-making, both within their own communities and within the national political sphere. Overall, States highlighted the problem of the underrepresentation of indigenous women in positions of power and decision-making. A few States highlighted affirmative measures that are being taken to remedy this problem in representative political structure and also in certain programmes.

57. **Australia** provides financial support to women's networks to encourage women to undertake leadership, representative and management roles in their communities, through the Government's indigenous women's grants programme. Between 2012 and 2013 the programme supported 63 projects and assisted more than 3,600 women. The Government also funds the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance, which aims to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and to advocate policy interventions into issues affecting them. In addition, the Government has helped increase the participation of indigenous women in the "Working on Country" programme, a project that helps protect and manage both land and sea and provides sustainable employment for indigenous peoples.

58. The **Plurinational State of Bolivia** has enacted laws to increase the political participation of indigenous women. In particular, article 11 of the Electoral Law No. 26 of 30 June 2010 requires that 50 per cent of candidates presented for national and local political positions be women. This includes those lists presented by indigenous communities in accordance with their traditional electoral systems. During the drafting of the new Constitution (2006-2007), 88 of 256 elected assembly members were women (35%), out of which 31 were indigenous women, including the president of the assembly. The national plan for equal opportunities — "Women building the new Bolivia for 'living well'", approved through supreme decree No. 28950, provides a strategy to eradicate the patriarchal system and ensure the participation of women in decision-making, among other measures.

59. **Canada** reported that among First Nations, as of August 2013 women held 16 per cent of band Chief positions, down slightly from the high of 19.8 per cent in 2012.

60. **Guyana** reported significant improvement in the political participation of Amerindian women. Of the six Amerindian members of Parliament, five are female. Furthermore, the Government noted that there are currently two female Amerindian ministers of government, holding the portfolios of foreign affairs and Amerindian affairs. Amerindian women also hold the positions of chair and deputy chair of the Indigenous People's Commission, which is mandated by the Guyana constitution to promote Amerindian rights. Four out of the 10 commissioners are also women. This is in accordance with a provision of the constitution requiring that of the three nominees from the National Toshaos Council one must be a woman and of the two nominees from the Amerindian organizations one must be a woman. At the local level, 10 per cent of the 186 elected Toshaos and senior councillors are women.

61. **Kenya** has established mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women. Three centres of excellence have been established where gender concerns are taken into account. For example studies will be conducted on how to integrate women's indigenous knowledge of the environment into environmental conservation efforts and environmental policies and laws.

62. **Mexico** reported that the constitutional reform in the area of human rights has facilitated the participation of decision-making by women in their communities through the harmonization of local and state laws. Nevertheless, in municipalities with a population of more than 40 per cent of indigenous language speakers, a limited number of indigenous women are involved in politics. For example in 2009, only 23 of 523 presidencies (4.4 per cent), 43 of 450 syndicates (9.6 per cent), and

910 of 3,402 regidurias (local level positions) (26.7 per cent) were occupied by women. In 2011, the Government implemented a strategy to strengthen the political and electoral rights of indigenous peoples in Mexico. In 2012, the national commission for the development of indigenous peoples established, as part of the programme of action for gender equality among the indigenous population, a joint fund for the creation and support of the training of indigenous women, which promotes strengthening of indigenous women's leadership and decision-making. In 2013, the project supported 22 training projects, with participation of 3,642 indigenous women.

63. **New Zealand** reported that the Ministry of Women's Affairs coordinates with the Māori Women's Welfare League to host discussions around the country on the issues women face and to follow up on their work.

64. **Norway** reported on efforts to increase women's participation in the Sámediggi (the Sami Parliament). In 2001, the Sámediggi had only seven female members (18 per cent of seats). With the objective of increasing female representation, in 2005 the Sámediggi initiated media and publicity campaigns and that year it was able to achieve a 50/50 balance with the election of 22 women to the parliament. Sámediggi has maintained the 50/50 gender balance in subsequent elections and now also has a female president.

5. The indigenous girl child

65. Several States have introduced special initiatives related to indigenous girls, especially in areas of education and health.

66. **Australia** has established specific programmes such as the "New Directions: An Equal Start in Life for Indigenous Children" programme. The programme aims to improve the health and education of indigenous children and their mothers by providing access to comprehensive mothers and babies' services, addressing rheumatic fever and other illnesses, and providing accommodation for indigenous women from remote areas who need to travel to regional centres to give birth.

67. In July 2014, the **Plurinational State of Bolivia** promulgated the new code for children and adolescents, which incorporates the principle of interculturality. The drafting process was led by the Ministry of Justice, with the participation of indigenous children with the support of their parents. On 1 August 2012, the President issued Executive Order No. 1302 to eliminate school bullying, and in December 2011 he approved a law declaring 2012 the year against child and adolescent violence.

68. **Canada** provided information about the Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities programme, which supports early childhood development in Métis, Inuit and First Nation populations living outside their reservations. The programme has had a positive impact on school readiness, particularly in the areas of language, social, motor and academic skills and cultural literacy. Furthermore, solid evidence is emerging that cultural attachment, resilience, positive relationships and coping with adverse events mitigate risks of violence, suicide and other negative ever[illegible].

69. **New Zealand** reported the rate of teenage childbirth among the Māori is significantly higher than for non-Māori. Since 2010, the Government has provided significant support to vulnerable teen parents and their children, including intensive

case workers, supported housing, parenting support for teen fathers, a childcare assistant payment and teen-parent units to enable young parents to continue their secondary education.

70. The Government of the **Philippines** reported that the phenomenon of early marriage is still common in some indigenous groups. Once married, schooling among girl children is often stopped. Among indigenous girls, only 10 per cent finished elementary schooling, 5 per cent finished high school and 20 per cent have no formal education or are classified illiterate. Lack of education severely limits girls' qualifications for work or employment. It often results in hardship and low paying jobs such as farming root crops and weaving, and subservient roles such as domestic work. There have been reports of indigenous girl children being recruited to nearby cities for domestic work or for work in entertainment establishments.

71. In **Suriname**, early childbearing among adolescent girls is disproportionately higher among the poor, those who live in rural areas and those who belong to indigenous and Maroon groups. Suriname also reported that there are strong indications that many adolescent pregnancies end in an abortion, including unsafe abortions.

6. Indigenous women and poverty

72. Several States provided information about poverty reduction and development policies and programmes with relevance to indigenous women. This includes facilitating the participation of indigenous women in the workforce, increasing the provision of basic services and securing indigenous peoples' access to land.

73. **Australia** reported that women's economic outcomes are affected by a diverse range of factors, including earning less, working part time, divorce or other factors. Indigenous women are less likely to participate in the labour-force (49.3 per cent) than indigenous men (61.6 per cent). The Government's efforts to support women's economic empowerment include a focus on increasing women's workforce participation, assisting women in business and addressing the gender pay gap.

74. The **Plurinational State of Bolivia** noted that it has various policies designed to overcome the extreme poverty faced by indigenous peoples, in particular by women. These have resulted in higher levels of basic services for women, including electricity and potable water. Furthermore, the Agrarian Reform Law of 1996, Law No. 1715, recognized the right of women to access to lands and property rights. In order to facilitate the participation of women in processes of land distribution and title clearance, the Government has created "Bartolina Sisa", the national confederation of indigenous and campesina women, The organization has also lobbied for the inclusion of provisions related to indigenous women in several more recent laws related to land, and has also lobbied for the inclusion of indigenous women in the president's political agenda up to 2025.

75. **Canada** reported that it has made a significant investment in the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy and the Skills and Partnership Fund to ensure that First Nation, Inuit and Métis people have the skills they need to secure sustainable, meaningful jobs, including training for women in non-traditional occupations. Furthermore, the Government has carried out an on-reserve income assistance programme, which provides assistance to eligible individuals and families living on-reserve and with financial needs, to help ensure that young

women and men can access the skills and training they need to secure employment. It also noted that in 2013, the Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act was adopted, which closed a legislative gap regarding matrimonial property protections and rights on First Nation reserves. Since 2009, comprehensive land claim and self-government agreements have been brought into effect for several First Nations.

76. **Suriname** has launched a project entitled "Support for sustainable development of the interior", through which the lands of the people living in the interior, including lands of indigenous peoples, have been demarcated. However, it noted that the Constitution does not yet recognize collective rights to land.

7. Indigenous women and statistics

77. Several States reported progress in compiling statistical data and qualitative studies. Some results are reported below.

78. **Argentina** reported that within the framework of actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014, it has included in its national report, data on indigenous peoples that has been disaggregated by sex.

79. The **Plurinational State of Bolivia** reported that the Population and Housing Census carried out in 2012 included questions relating to self-identification and language, which were disaggregated by sex and age. In 2012, the Ministry of Justice and the National Statistical Institute, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, has undertaken the elaboration of human rights indicators for the eradication of violence against women, trafficking and sexual and reproductive health.

80. The Government of **Costa Rica** reported the tenth census on population and sixth census on housing included a question on self-identification and gender which allowed for information to be collected on indigenous women.

81. **Ethiopia** noted that it requires relevant ministries to enhance the gender responsiveness of sector policies, including collecting data on the situation of indigenous women.

82. **Finland** recognizes the importance of paying particular attention to intersectional and multiple forms of discrimination based on gender and for other reasons, and it has also recognized that there is not enough sex-disaggregated research data available on the status, living conditions or political participation of the Sámi peoples to support decision-making.

83. The Government of **Guatemala** reported that in 2013 data disaggregation by ethnic groups had been prioritized in order that the differences between indigenous and non-indigenous men and women in a number of areas could be examined. Guatemala has a set of 46 indicators to collect data in 6 areas: demography, economy, education, health, political participation and violence against women.

84. **Guyana** included questions related to Amerindian identity and gender as part of its demographic and household survey of 2009.

85. In 2013, the Government of **New Zealand** carried out *Te Kupenga*, a first survey of Māori well-being that includes 5,000 people of Maori ethnicity and/or

Maori descent. *Te Kupenga* collected information on a wide range of topics to give an overall picture of their social, cultural and economic well-being.

III. Conclusions

86. Indigenous women are emerging as a powerful and compelling voice in the indigenous rights and the women's rights movements, promoting conditions for the improved exercise and better enjoyment of their rights on the basis of equality, and in a nuanced manner, so as to ensure respect for these rights while continuing to maintain and transmit indigenous cultures and values.

87. Within this context, there has been a steady progress in the achievements made by indigenous women at the national and international levels. Indigenous women have made headway in highlighting their issues through increased participation at international forums, both as part of that processes related to indigenous peoples and those that relate to women more broadly. These efforts have ensured that indigenous women's rights and concerns are recognized and reflected in international instruments such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention of the International Labour Organization (Convention No. 169), as well as in the more recent outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

88. Nevertheless, 20 years after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, indigenous women are still facing significant challenges to the full enjoyment of their human rights. The analysis of national reviews highlights indigenous women's specific situations and progress made by States, as well as insights into the numerous outstanding challenges. The wide array of measures reported by States show that advances in indigenous women's rights vary greatly across regions and countries and are influenced by national priorities and political opportunities, as well as by financial resources. It is worth noting that certain States and regions have various initiatives that include a specific focus on indigenous women, while others are largely silent on the issue.

89. The most targeted action by States appears to be in the areas of violence against women, health, education and capacity-building. These areas are more clearly gender-specific (especially violence against women and health concerns affecting women in particular), or are areas in which indigenous women have been shown to experience a particular vulnerability or disadvantage (such as illiteracy rates). Within these areas, several States recognized that indigenous women face specific challenges that merit differentiated action. Certainly, some of the measures described by States in their reports to address concerns could be described as emerging good practices, which could be built upon or replicated in other countries or contexts.

90. An overarching concern identified by States is the level of participation by indigenous women in power and in decision-making, both at the local and national levels. Across the board, women still face discrimination in this regard, despite the modest gains made in some countries. The low level of participation by indigenous women presents both a problem in and of itself as well as a hurdle to the raising of awareness about and developing solutions to the wide range of other concerns for indigenous women in areas including education, health, violence, poverty reduction and access to justice. Increasing the participation of indigenous women in power

and in decision-making should be a priority both for States and within indigenous communities.

91. Furthermore, responding to the particular issues faced by indigenous women could be improved by mainstreaming and by considering their rights as a crosscutting issue in general policies and programmes on women and/or indigenous peoples. In addition, responses to the concerns faced by indigenous women could be improved by increasing awareness of the issues of concern to indigenous women among national decision makers and authorities. This would enable policymakers to have a better understanding of the many issues that indigenous women are currently facing. In this regard, the disaggregation of data by sex and ethnicity is a fundamental tool for identifying and measuring problem areas and developing solutions.

92. Finally, it is worth noting that addressing concerns facing indigenous women and girls requires that both their rights as women and their rights as indigenous peoples be made a priority. In this regard, the rights enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must be advanced concurrently with initiatives designed specifically for indigenous women so as to help in tackling the structural problems affecting indigenous peoples that further contribute to the difficulties affecting indigenous women in particular. This includes advancement of the right to self-determination by indigenous peoples so that they can themselves participate in the development of effective, culturally appropriate and sustainable solutions to the problems faced by indigenous women.